



# State of Connecticut Department of Correction

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For Immediate Release

## **The Department of Correction transfers COVID-19 positive offenders to Northern CI**

Wednesday, April 8, 2020

As part of the Agency's ongoing efforts to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus and in the best interest of the inmate population, the Connecticut Department of Correction has begun moving all offenders who have tested positive for COVID-19 to the Northern Correctional Institution.

This decision is in line with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for correctional and detention facilities which recommends establishing medical isolation units where positive COVID-19 patients are managed in cells with solid walls and solid doors that close fully. The Northern facility's infrastructure provides for optimal air quality through a separate ventilation system in each housing unit that draws one hundred percent outside air and exhaust it without any recirculation. This is similar to ventilation systems found in most medical/hospital environments.

This COVID-19 response will contribute to the preservation of the statewide inventory of personal protection equipment (PPE) through the creation of one centralized treatment location, maximizing efficiencies of agency healthcare staff. When needed, we will establish medical isolation units at locations where movement to Northern Correctional Institution is not appropriate. Although no offenders at the York, Garner, or Manson Youth facilities (women, youth, those with acute mental health issues) have tested positive for the virus, we are prepared to treat any offender within any of these three respective facility should the need arise.

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“Thanks in part to the Agency’s concerted effort to responsibly release offenders, our population is down by more than 800 individuals since March 1, allowing us the ability to isolate offenders who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus in a centralized location,” said Commissioner Rollin Cook. “Housing those who have the virus at the Northern facility is in line with the CDC’s guidance. It is also in the best interest of everyone.”

All necessary precautions are being taken during transportation, including the use of masks for both staff and offenders and a thorough cleaning process of restraints and vehicles at the conclusion of trips.